

APPLICATION REPORT

Project Name: e-SEARCH: An online autism resource center for individuals with IDD and their families

Applicant Organization: UC Riverside

Awarded Amount: \$99,832

Funding Announcement Name: Promoting Service Access and Equity Grant



PROJECT SUMMARY

In the current re-application, SEARCH and the Inland Regional Center aim to increase Purchase of Services (POS) for both English- and Spanish-speaking Hispanic families of children aged 3-21, specifically in the Desert and Coachella Valley areas of the Inland Empire. We will do this by increasing the number of families who receive support, education, and advocacy-related services during key transitional periods (e.g. transitioning from receiving an initial diagnosis to receiving services, transitioning to formal schooling, and transitioning out of high school). The target youth will be at various stages in these transition processes and all require POS. The proposed project will support families at all stages of these transitions by providing a suite of online resources (e.g. podcasts, webinars) and personalized supports (e.g. a “helpline” where families can reach us in real-time). Phase 1 (Months 1-6, Year 1). Community Outreach and Program Promotion. During the first 6 months of Year 1, SEARCH and Inland Regional Center (IRC) will engage in Community Outreach and Program Promotion to notify families in the Coachella Valley of this new program. Extensive community engagement is also necessary to build trusting relationships with minority families, as research suggests that Hispanic families have a higher distrust of care providers than White families (Armstrong, Ravenell, McMurphy, & Putt, 2007). In addition, a study conducted at the UC Davis Center for Reducing Health Disparities found that Hispanic/Latinx families reported an overall lack of exposure to professionals and providers that kept them from seeking services (Aguilar-Gaxiola et al., 2012). Strategies used for increasing participation of minority families will be based on research (Zamora et al., 2016), which suggests (a) partnering with community-based organizations that serve these families, (b) engaging in discussions with parents through local activities, and (c) having a culturally and linguistically available member of the program available to answer questions. SEARCH and Inland Regional Center include personnel who are fluent in written and oral Spanish. This will minimize language barriers in our outreach efforts, and will be instrumental to the subsequent program components. Other means of program promotion will include creating relevant information (in English and Spanish) that will be available on websites and social media. Phase 2 (Months 7-12, Year 1). E-Services for Families of Newly Diagnosed Children. After reaching out to potentially eligible and interested families (Phase 1), a suite of online services (e-services) will be offered to all interested families. Phase 1 of e-services will focus specifically on issues related to families of those children newly diagnosed around the age of 3. The suite of e-services includes: 1) An online webinar featuring experts on access to initial services from SEARCH, IRC, and/or community experts (e.g. advocates, providers, etc.). This will provide education for parents focusing on issues relevant to families of newly diagnosed children. The webinar will be recorded and posted online so families can access it at any time and will be available in both Spanish and English. 2) A short podcast discussing how/where/when to obtain services from IRC, what services are available, and how to connect with case managers. The podcast will serve as something of a “Q&A” in which members of our team present common questions/concerns and provide answers. The podcast will be available in Spanish and English and will be ideal for families who may not have time to watch a webinar and are looking for something more concise/brief. 3) An open “helpline” and small-group mentorship sessions for parents who want personalized advice/information. We will hold open “helpline” hours once a month (in 2-4 hour blocks) in which parents can call and get answers/support in a private manner. 4) For families who have personalized questions that are less personal and/or families who want to connect with other families, we will hold scheduled small-group mentorship sessions. During these mentorship sessions parents can speak directly with experts from SEARCH and/or IRC about their individual needs or concerns and have questions answered in real time. Each mentorship session will be limited to no more than 5 families, so multiple mentorship sessions will be held during

Phase 1. Both the helpline and small-group mentorship sessions will be held in English and/or Spanish depending on parent preference. These small-group sessions will occur through video-conferencing (i.e., Zoom or Skype), or in person if COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. Families may sign up to attend small group mentorship sessions either directly by contacting SEARCH or by contacting their IRC case manager. If they do not have a case manager, we hope to encourage them to enroll with IRC so they can obtain appropriate POS. Phase 3 (Months 1-6, Year 2). E-Services for Families of Children Transitioning to Formal Schooling. In Phase 3 we will be offering the same suite of e-services as noted above in Phase 2, but Phase 3 will focus specifically on issues/concerns related to the transition to formal schooling, thus requiring new content and recordings. As above, we will offer an online webinar, short podcast, and helpline, and small group mentoring sessions focused on issues related to this transition period (e.g. understanding Individualized Education Plans and 504 plans, how to advocate for your child with educators, etc.) Also, as SEARCH members are experts in all aspects of the IDEA law and accessing appropriate public education, they will be able to help families differentiate public school supports from the role that IRC can play in supporting school-aged children Phase 4 (Months 7-12, Year 2). E-Services for Families of Children Preparing to Transition out of Formal Schooling. In Phase 4 we will be offering the same suite of e-services as noted above in Phases 2-3, but Phase 4 will focus specifically on issues/concerns related to transitioning out of school/transitioning to adulthood, again requiring new content and recordings. As above, we will offer an online webinar, short podcast, helpline, and small group mentoring sessions focused on issues related to this transition (e.g. understanding individualized transition plans, awareness about potential co-occurring mental health difficulties, community opportunities for employment, and what services are available from IRC for youth during this transition). Throughout the implementation of this proposed expanded program, the SEARCH team will mentor and support parents in all aspects of autism and/or ID during transitional periods between ages 3-21, and will dedicate at least one bilingual fellow to all aspects of Phases 1-4.

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
Applicant Eligibility		
Applicant Information		
1. Project Title	Applicant Response	
What is the Project Title?	e-SEARCH: An online autism resource center for individuals with IDD and their families	
2. Awarded Amount	Applicant Response	
	\$99,832	
3. Organization Type	Applicant Response	
Please check the box that describes your organization	Community Based Organization (CBO), 501(c)(3)	
4. Description of Organization/Group	Applicant Response	
Provide a brief description of the organization/group (organization type, group mission, etc.). Explain what experience your organization has managing a program similar to the proposal and state the outcomes of that program.	Established by the Graduate Student of Education at UC Riverside, SEARCH is a family autism resource center, providing autism screening and educational access for underrepresented groups. The focus here is on youth with ASD and ID (or ASD comorbid with ID). Most families who visit SEARCH are Latino, and all are from the Inland Empire - one of the poorest metropolitan regions in the United States.	
5. Applicant in Good Standing	Applicant Response	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
Is the applicant in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board, and California Department of Tax and Fee Administration?	Yes	
6. Subcontractors in Good Standing	Applicant Response	
Are the applicant's subcontractors in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board, and California Department of Tax and Fee Administration?	Not Applicable	
Grant Reapplication Information		
Grant Reapplications Only		
1. Grant Number	Applicant Response	
(Reapplications Only) What is the Grant Number of previously awarded project? If not applicable select Not Applicable.	18-C30	
2. Project Title	Applicant Response	
(Reapplications Only) What is the Project Title of previously awarded project? If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Increasing Awareness and Support for Parents in Youth with ASD/ID in the Desert and Coachella Valley	
3. Project Start & End Dates	Applicant Response	
(Reapplications Only) What are the Start & End Dates of the previously awarded project? If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Start Date: 05/08/2019, End Date: 02/27/2021	
4. Project Duration	Applicant Response	
(Reapplications Only) What is the Total Project Duration (in months) of the previously awarded project? If not applicable select Not Applicable.	24	
5. 2016/2017 Award	Applicant Response	
(Reapplications Only) Enter the amount of funding that was awarded in FY 2016/2017. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
6. 2016/2017 Expenses	Applicant Response	
(Reapplicants only) Enter the amount of funding that was expended in FY 2016/2017. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
7. 2016/2017 Remaining	Applicant Response	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
(Reapplicants only) Subtract the Total Expenses from the Total Award to determine the amount remaining from FY 2016/2017. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
8. 2017/2018 Award	Applicant Response	
(Reapplicants only) Enter the amount of funding that was awarded in FY 2017/2018. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
9. 2017/2018 Expenses	Applicant Response	
(Reapplicants) Enter the amount of funding that was expended in FY 2017/2018. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
10. 2017/2018 Remaining	Applicant Response	
(Reapplicants only) Subtract the Total Expenses from the Total Award to determine the amount remaining from FY 2017/2018. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
11. 2018/2019 Award	Applicant Response	
(Reapplicants only) Enter the amount of funding that was awarded in FY 2018/2019. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	\$186,549.00	
12. 2018/2019 Expenses	Applicant Response	
(Reapplicants only) Enter the total amount of funding that was expended, or is anticipated to be expended, in FY 2018/2019. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	\$131,393.00	
13. 2018/2019 Remaining	Applicant Response	
(Reapplicants only) Subtract the Total Expenses from the Total Award to determine the amount remaining from FY 2018/2019. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	\$55,156.00	
14. 2019/2020 Award	Applicant Response	
(Reapplicants only) Enter the amount of funding that was awarded in FY 2019/2020. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
15. 2019/2020 Expenses	Applicant Response	
(Reapplicants only) Enter the total amount of funding that was expended, or is anticipated to be expended, in FY 2019/2020. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
<p>16. 2019/2020 Remaining</p> <p>(Reapplicants only) Subtract the Total Expenses from the Total Award to determine the amount remaining from FY 2019/2020. If not applicable select Not Applicable.</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>Not Applicable</p>	
<p>17. Total Awarded</p> <p>(Reapplicants only) Combine the amounts included in FY 2016/2017, FY 2017/2018, FY 2018/2019, and FY 2019/2020 for the total amount awarded for the project. If not applicable select Not Applicable.</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>\$186,549.00</p>	
<p>18. Initial Proposed Number of People Served</p> <p>(Reapplications Only) Include the initial number of people projected to be served. If not applicable select Not Applicable.</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>236</p>	
<p>19. Actual Number of People Served</p> <p>(Reapplications Only) Include the actual number of people served. Explain why this number is different from the projected impact number. If not applicable select Not Applicable.</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>624. We served significantly more people than anticipated.</p>	
<p>20. Regional Centers in Catchment Area</p> <p>(Reapplications Only) List all Regional Centers in the project catchment areas that the project has served. If not applicable select Not Applicable.</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>Inland Regional Center</p>	
<p>21. Cities Served</p> <p>(Reapplications Only) List the cities your project has served. If not applicable select Not Applicable.</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>San Bernadino, Riverside, Palm Desert, Coachella Valley</p>	
<p>22. Counties Served</p> <p>(Reapplications Only) List the counties your project has served. If not applicable select Not Applicable.</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>Inland Empire (San Bernadino and Riverside)</p>	
<p>23. City of Los Angeles</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p>	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
(Reapplications Only) If your project has served the City of Los Angeles, list the zip code(s) and/or community(ies) your project has served. If not applicable select Not Applicable.	Not Applicable	
24. Activities to Date	Applicant Response	
(Reapplications Only) Provide a detailed explanation of project activities to date. Include what the project has accomplished to date. From the start of the project to the date of reapplication, what are the key accomplishments? Have all activities been completed? If no, why not? If not applicable select Not Applicable.	<p><i>Our initial grant, "Increasing Awareness and Support for Parents in Youth with ASD/ID in the Desert and Coachella Valley", has met or exceeded our proposed goals. In each year of the two-year project, we proposed to hold one parent conference followed by individual mentorship to parents of youth with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and/or intellectual disability (ID) residing in rural areas of Riverside County. Our goal was for approximately 100 families to attend the conference in each year (total n=200), and for 16 parents to receive mentorship in each year (total n=32). In Year 1, in collaboration with the Inland Regional Center (IRC) and Fiesta Educativa, we completed a successful in-person parent conference related to early identification and diagnosis of ASD and ID. <u>As evidence of progress</u>, we note that 109 parents registered as attending our in-person conference in May 2019, although over 200 individuals were present at the event. Following the conference, 43 families indicated interest in mentorship. Of those who were interested, 18 attended our in-person mentorship session in the fall of that year (2019).</i></p> <p>In Year 2, we originally planned to hold a second conference and mentorship session in the spring of 2020, except with a focus on the transition to adulthood. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were forced to shift our service delivery method from in-person to online. Although our collaboration with Fiesta Educativa was fruitful in Year 1, the pandemic necessitated flexibility and adaptation to an entirely new, online format. <u>Thus, as additional evidence of progress</u>, in the fall of 2020, we held four inter-related webinars on the transition to adulthood, rights and services in the era of COVID-19, and mental health in youth with ASD/ID during this transitional period. Across the webinars, we had an average of 121 attendees at each, which was significantly more participation than we expected given the stressors related to COVID-19. Both IRC and the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) had a presence at these. In a fruitful collaboration, SCDD contributed their software and expertise to the running of the webinars. Parent outcomes are detailed in the most recent quarterly report. After the online webinars, 53 families indicated interest in ongoing mentorship and consultation. A total of 13 have confirmed interest in mentorship, of which four are Spanish-speaking. We are currently in the process of re-connecting with the others and expect that number to increase slightly. Two dates for these mentorship sessions have been identified (in January, 2021).</p>	
25. Project Impact & Outcome	Applicant Response	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
<p>(Reapplications Only) Provide a detailed explanation of project impacts and outcomes to date. Attach data (summary of pre-tests and post-tests), participant success stories to demonstrate project outcomes and impacts. Provide outcomes of your project's impact in serving the target communities. Using your attached data, provide a brief statement of key findings. If not applicable select Not Applicable.</p>	<p>There was immediate evidence of impact from our current grant. For our in-person conference and mentorship session in 2019, parents indicated high levels of satisfaction. Qualitative data from our first conference demonstrated that many parents valued the information provided (e.g., "We needed something like this in the Coachella Valley!"), found it useful (e.g., "This conference was very informative regarding services. Very well organized!"), and desired greater access to our program ("Very useful information. It would be great to have similar ones [to this conference] in Beaumont-Banning area"). For the 2020 virtual events, we had similarly high levels of satisfaction. A significant majority of webinar attendees expressed high levels of satisfaction related to technology, content, and usefulness (e.g. ease of access, interest in more webinars, satisfaction with the information presented, and parent ratings of confidence navigating services). As an illustrative example, of the 33 participants who completed post-webinar satisfaction surveys after webinar 1, all 33 indicated interest in future webinars, and all rated being either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with the information presented. Across all webinars, no families indicated being unsatisfied with the information presented. One parent commented, "I feel empowered to better help my son because of all the additional information and ideas." Another stated, "It [webinar] has given information that will help me to be more efficient and prepare my son for adulthood." <u>Taken together, activities from the current grant have been highly successful in terms of education, outreach, and parent satisfaction. The current application seeks to build upon our momentum and expand our reach and family connections to IRC.</u></p>	
<p>26. Project Objectives</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p>	
<p>(Reapplications Only) What are the projects objectives in addressing disparities and what remains to be addressed/completed? Explain why these objectives have not been completed during the current grant period. Provide a brief description of the key lessons learned from your current project, if any. What were some of the challenges that prevented your project from meeting your objectives/measures? What are some strategies your organization plans to implement to address challenges, if any? If not applicable select Not Applicable.</p>	<p>The only activity pending completion for the current project is our parent mentorship session, 2020/21. We have scheduled two sessions (one in English and one in Spanish) for January, 2021, during which we will have small-group discussions and one-on-one consultations. We originally planned to complete the mentorship in Fall, 2020 but our grant timeline was delayed due to COVID-19.</p>	
<p>27. Project Transition</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p>	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
<p>(Reapplications Only) If awarded, how will your current project transition into the 2020/21 proposed project? How does your proposed project complement your current project? Does your proposed project expand or continue your current project, if so how? What activities, measures, or target groups are being added? Provide a summary of the differences and reasons why you are proposing the change. If not applicable, select Not Applicable.</p>	<p>Our proposed re-application will build upon and expand our current project. Our 2018-2020 project was designed to include in-person education, outreach, and support for families of young children and youth transitioning to adulthood across two years. <i>The current project expands our target group to include all children with autism (abbreviated here as ASD) and/or intellectual disability (ID) between the ages of 3-21. We remain focused on providing education, outreach, and support to Spanish and English-speaking Hispanic families in the Inland Empire, particularly those in rural areas (e.g. the Desert and Coachella Valley).</i></p> <p>During our 2018-2020 grant, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated moving our Year 2 activities online. We quickly realized that an online format allowed us to reach significantly more families than we would have through in-person events. <i>The proposed re-application builds on this momentum and incorporates lessons learned from our 2020 online events.</i> Our data from 2020 indicates that parents were very satisfied with our webinar series and many indicated interest in more webinars on related topics. In the current re-application, we propose expanding our services to include not only webinars but also digestible podcasts, scheduled small-group mentorship sessions, and a much-needed consultation supports helpline. We will continue to gather post-event data. However, in order to increase the number of people who contribute such data, we will also spend time instructing parents/caregivers on how to do this.</p> <p>Importantly, we recognized the need for parent education, support, and mentorship during transition periods when children/youth are between the ages of 3-21. Parents of children and youth in this age range face three recognizable transition periods in which support is needed: (1) Transitioning to having a child with a diagnosis and navigating initial services, (2) Transitioning to formal schooling and navigating/understanding services provided at school, and those provided by the Regional Center, if appropriate, and (3) Transitioning away from formal schooling and planning for adulthood. <i>By offering a "suite" of online services at each of these three transitional periods, we will expand the number of families who utilize these supports/educational materials and hope to increase Purchase of Services (POS) by eligible consumers in this age range in the Inland Empire.</i></p>	
General Application		
Proposal Summary		
1. Individuals Impacted	Applicant Response	
Enter the projected number of individuals impacted.	198	
2. People Served	Applicant Response	
What is proposed number of people projected to be served?	198	
3. Duration of project	Applicant Response	
What is the duration of the project? Enter Start & End Dates.	Start Date: 02/28/2021, End Date: 02/27/2023	
4. Duration of project (months)	Applicant Response	
What is the total duration of project in months?	24	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
5. Regional Centers List all Regional Centers in the project catchment areas.	Applicant Response Inland Regional Center	
6. Cities Served List the city or cities your project proposes to serve.	Applicant Response San Bernadino, Riverside, Palm Desert, Coachella Valley	
7. Counties Served List the county or counties your project proposes to serve.	Applicant Response Inland Empire (Riverside and San Bernadino Counties)	
8. City of Los Angeles If your project proposes to serve the City of Los Angeles, list the zip codes and/or communities your project will serve.	Applicant Response Not Applicable	
9. Community Based Organizations Will you be working with one or more Community Based Organization?	Applicant Response Not Applicable	
10. Regional Center Data If you plan to use regional center data for your project, indicate what steps you will take (or already have taken) to acquire it. For example, completing a data agreement, completing a data request, meeting with RC to discuss data availability/timelines, etc.	Applicant Response Purchase of Services (POS) data was made available by the CA Department of Developmental Services, online.	
11. First Project Type Selection Select your first project type.	Applicant Response Family/consumer support services (coaching, enhanced CM)	
12. Second Project Type Selection Select your second project type (if applicable).	Applicant Response Parent Education (online or in person trainings, etc)	
13. Third Project Type Selection Select your third project type (if applicable).	Applicant Response Engagement and Outreach (community events, etc)	
14. Multiple Organizations Does your project include partnership with one or more organizations either as a co-applicant or subcontractor? If "yes", please upload a letter of support from each organization, that includes an explanation of their role in the partnership.	Applicant Response No	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
<p>15. Leverage & Strategies</p> <p>Describe how your organization will leverage and build upon strategies, collaborations, and lessons learned to continue to address the identified disparities after completion of the project. How will your project continue its work after the grant funding has concluded?</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>During each Phase, data will be compiled and analyzed on an ongoing basis and presented as reports to the program teams. <u>Each phase of this program leverages the success of the earlier program and the feedback from parents/community members in development. We learned that parents enjoy, benefit from, and want information, and that not having to travel to receive it is key. We also learned that the community provided by our previous interactive webinars (with Q&A sessions and small break-out rooms where parents would communicate with one another, as well as with the professionals present) was even more effective than costlier in-person conferences. We have been able to collect post-program surveys, through online survey methods, that informed each phase. Thus, the current proposal program leverages technology, useful now as well as in the post-COVID world.</u></p> <p>Based on reports of results of the program components and stakeholder feedback, the Project Directors (Drs. Jan Blacher, Katherine Stavropoulos, and Yasmin Bolourian) will work with key partners at Inland Regional Center (CJ Cook and Lilliana Garica; see letter) to modify aspects of the program as needed. Further, these prepared reports will comply with the reporting requirements, will include the required data, and will be submitted quarterly.</p> <p><u>After program funding ceases, recorded webinars and podcasts will be archived online for families to easily access when needed. Based on data from performance measures in the proposed project, SEARCH will continue offering piece(s) of the program which were reported to be useful to stakeholders and met with enthusiasm (e.g. we will continue offering a monthly "helpline" if stakeholders find that service helpful among those offered). With input, feedback, and support from members of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) who are local to the Coachella Valley/Desert region, we will continue providing support, education, and services to both English and Spanish-speaking Hispanic families in the Inland Empire after the completion of the proposed grant. Finally, this program will utilize the help of doctoral students at SEARCH, who are training specifically in the area of autism and developmental disabilities; they can help train subsequent cohorts of students. We have a dozen or so students at our Center every year who can serve in this capacity. As noted above, though, it is first critical to determine which elements of the program are evaluated as effective and as having an impact on both families and their POS.</u></p>	<p>1</p>
Target Population		
<p>1. Target Groups Served</p> <p>Select all groups the project will serve. If you select "Pacific Islander" or "Other" use comment section to list all groups.</p> <p>Applicant Comment</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>Hispanic</p>	
<p>2. Number of Target Group Served</p> <p>For each target group selected in previous question, list number served.</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>We anticipate that all participants served will be Hispanic.</p>	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
<p>3. Languages</p> <p>Select all Languages the project will serve. If you select "Other" please list all languages.</p> <p>Applicant Comment</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>Spanish</p>	
<p>4. Age Groups Served</p> <p>Select all Age Groups the project will serve. If you select "Other" please list groups.</p> <p>Applicant Comment</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>Three to 21</p>	
Project Application		
Project Application		
<p>1. Project Summary</p> <p>Provide a clear and concise project summary that includes a defined target population, catchment area, and project design. Specifically describe what your project will accomplish and how it will benefit the community served.</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p><i>In the current re-application, SEARCH and the Inland Regional Center aim to increase Purchase of Services (POS) for both English- and Spanish-speaking Hispanic families of children aged 3-21, specifically in the Desert and Coachella Valley areas of the Inland Empire. We will do this by increasing the number of families who receive support, education, and advocacy-related services during key transitional periods (e.g. transitioning from receiving an initial diagnosis to receiving services, transitioning to formal schooling, and transitioning out of high school). The target youth will be at various stages in these transition processes and all require POS. The proposed project will support families at all stages of these transitions by providing a suite of online resources (e.g. podcasts, webinars) and personalized supports (e.g. a "helpline" where families can reach us in real-time).</i></p> <p>Phase 1 (Months 1-6, Year 1). Community Outreach and Program Promotion. During the first 6 months of Year 1, SEARCH and Inland Regional Center (IRC) will engage in Community Outreach and Program Promotion to notify families in the Coachella Valley of this new program. Extensive community engagement is also necessary to build trusting relationships with minority families, as research suggests that Hispanic families have a higher distrust of care providers than White families (Armstrong, Ravenell, McMurphy, & Putt, 2007). In addition, a study conducted at the UC Davis Center for Reducing Health Disparities found that Hispanic/Latinx families reported an overall lack of exposure to professionals and providers that kept them from seeking services (Aguilar-Gaxiola et al., 2012). Strategies used for increasing participation of minority families will be based on research (Zamora et al., 2016), which suggests (a) partnering with community-based organizations that serve these families, (b) engaging in discussions with parents through local activities, and (c) having a culturally and linguistically available member of the program available to answer questions. SEARCH and Inland Regional Center include personnel who are fluent in written and oral Spanish. This will minimize language barriers in our outreach efforts, and will be instrumental to the subsequent program components. Other means of program promotion will include creating relevant information (in English and Spanish) that will be available on websites and social media.</p> <p>Phase 2 (Months 7-12, Year 1). E-Services for Families of Newly Diagnosed Children. After reaching out to potentially eligible and interested families (Phase 1), a suite of online services (e-services) will be offered to all interested families.</p>	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
	<p>Phase 1 of e-services will focus specifically on issues related to families of those children newly diagnosed around the age of 3.</p> <p>The suite of e-services includes: 1) An online <i>webinar</i> featuring experts on access to initial services from SEARCH, IRC, and/or community experts (e.g. advocates, providers, etc.). This will provide education for parents focusing on issues relevant to families of newly diagnosed children. The webinar will be recorded and posted online so families can access it at any time and will be available in both Spanish and English. 2) A short <i>podcast</i> discussing how/where/when to obtain services from IRC, what services are available, and how to connect with case managers. The podcast will serve as something of a "Q&A" in which members of our team present common questions/concerns and provide answers. The podcast will be available in Spanish and English and will be ideal for families who may not have time to watch a webinar and are looking for something more concise/brief. 3) An <i>open "helpline"</i> and small-group mentorship sessions for parents who want personalized advice/information. We will hold open "helpline" hours once a month (in 2-4 hour blocks) in which parents can call and get answers/support in a private manner. 4) For families who have personalized questions that are less personal and/or families who want to connect with other families, we will hold scheduled <i>small-group mentorship</i> sessions. During these mentorship sessions parents can speak directly with experts from SEARCH and/or IRC about their individual needs or concerns and have questions answered in real time. Each mentorship session will be limited to no more than 5 families, so multiple mentorship sessions will be held during Phase 1. Both the helpline and small-group mentorship sessions will be held in English and/or Spanish depending on parent preference. These small-group sessions will occur through video-conferencing (i.e., Zoom or Skype), or in person if COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. Families may sign up to attend small group mentorship sessions either directly by contacting SEARCH or by contacting their IRC case manager. If they do not have a case manager, we hope to encourage them to enroll with IRC so they can obtain appropriate POS.</p> <p>Phase 3 (Months 1-6, Year 2). E-Services for Families of Children Transitioning to Formal Schooling. In Phase 3 we will be offering the same suite of e-services as noted above in Phase 2, but Phase 3 will focus specifically on issues/concerns related to the transition to formal schooling, thus requiring new content and recordings. As above, we will offer an online webinar, short podcast, and helpline, and small group mentoring sessions focused on issues related to this transition period (e.g. understanding Individualized Education Plans and 504 plans, how to advocate for your child with educators, etc.) Also, as SEARCH members are experts in all aspects of the IDEA law and accessing appropriate public education, they will be able to help families differentiate public school supports from the role that IRC can play in supporting school-aged children</p> <p>Phase 4 (Months 7-12, Year 2). E-Services for Families of Children Preparing to Transition out of Formal Schooling. In Phase 4 we will be offering the same suite of e-services as noted above in Phases 2-3, but Phase 4 will focus specifically on issues/concerns related to transitioning out of school/transitioning to adulthood, again requiring new content and recordings. As above, we will offer an online webinar, short podcast, helpline, and small group mentoring sessions focused on issues related to this transition (e.g. understanding individualized transition plans, awareness about potential co-occurring mental health difficulties, community opportunities for employment, and what services are available from IRC for youth during this transition).</p> <p><i>Throughout the implementation of this proposed expanded program, the SEARCH team will mentor and support parents in all aspects of autism and/or ID during transitional periods between ages 3-21 and will dedicate at least one</i></p>	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
<p>2. Organization Experience</p> <p>What experience does the organization/group have working with the target population?</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p> <p>The UC Riverside SEARCH Center and Inland Regional Center - collaborating partners on this proposal – have experience working with English- and Spanish-speaking Hispanic families who have children aged 3-21 with autism (ASD) and/or intellectual disability (ID), the target population.</p> <p><u>SEARCH Center.</u> To date, over 50% of children screened at the SEARCH Center have been Latinx and 20% have been Spanish speaking. SEARCH's free screening service reaches about 100 children a year. Through individual consultations and parent education, SEARCH helps families understand ASD and/or ID, and learn about appropriate services designed to meet their children's needs in the Inland Empire. SEARCH also helps parents access educational services from school districts, and to learn specifically about the role of regional center. SEARCH staff are knowledgeable about available services in the IE, and have experience supporting families of children/youth in our target age range (3-21) as they navigate initial diagnosis/services (e.g. ages 3-5), move to formal schooling (e.g. ages 4-6), and plan for the transition out of school (e.g. ages 15+).</p> <p><u>SEARCH Leadership.</u> Dr. Jan Blacher, Director of SEARCH, grew the concept for the Center out of her 30+ years of research with families of individuals with ASD, ID and other neurodevelopmental disabilities. Funded by the National Institute of Health (NICHD, R01HD034879), her ongoing work has involved hundreds of families in the Inland Empire, many of whom are Spanish-speaking and have children with ID and/or ASD. Published studies speak to the role of culture on family adjustment and on cultural and ethnic disparities among Latino/Hispanic populations (as examples: Blacher, Stavropoulos, & Bolourian, 2018; Blacher, 2001; Blacher, Cohen & Azad, 2014; Blacher & McIntyre, 2006). Throughout her research career, she has focused on issues of accessing services and appropriate educational programs. Most pertinent to this re-application is the previously completed work that Dr. Blacher and her colleagues on the transition to adulthood (Bolourian, Zeedyk, & Blacher, 2018; Zeedyk, Bolourian, & Blacher, 2018), transition to schooling (Blacher et al., 2014; Bolourian, Stavropoulos, & Blacher, 2019; Eisenhower, Bush, & Blacher, 2015), and the importance of providing services to underrepresented parents during these times. Dr. Stavropoulos, Assistant Director of SEARCH, is also a clinical psychologist, as well as an expert in EEG research pertaining to autism and social motivation. Dr. Bolourian came to UCR with vast clinical experience at UCLA and clinical work on social skills in teens and young adults with autism, as well as in assessment. She is a Post-Doctoral Fellow at SEARCH. SEARCH also has a team of talented and ethnically/linguistically diverse graduate students to participate on this proposed new project.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>3. Underserved Target Populations</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p>	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
<p>Explain how the target population(s) are underserved using RC POS data or other data as supporting evidence of the disparity.</p>	<p><u>Inland Regional Center (IRC) – 2019 Purchase of Service (POS) Data.</u> According to 2018/2019 IRC Purchase of Service (POS) data, the two primarily served ethnic groups are White and Hispanic. Across all ages, POS data indicate that 25.3% of eligible Hispanic consumers have no purchased services, whereas 20.2% of eligible White consumers have no purchased services. This gap between the number of eligible consumers and those who utilize services becomes more extreme when examining the POS data for children aged 3-21. For that age group, 32% of both eligible Hispanic and White consumers do not have any purchased services. When examining consumers ages 3-21 with no POS by language, 32.1% of English-speaking consumers have no POS and 27.5% of Spanish-speaking consumers have no POS, which suggests that strides have been made with the Spanish-speaking group. This is in stark contrast with data from other age groups (e.g. 0-2 and 22+) in which less than 23% of eligible consumers have zero POS. <i>Taken together, these data suggest a specific need for attending to POS for Hispanic and White consumers in the 3-21-year-old age range. SEARCH is particularly well suited to serve the needs of both Spanish and English speaking Hispanic families, ages 3 to 21, given both our mission and history of successfully working with this population.</i></p> <p><u>Impact of Autism and ID in the Desert and Coachella Valley.</u> Today, 1 in 54 children in the U.S. will be diagnosed with autism (Maenner et al., 2020). Autism occurs in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. However, state-level data from children born in California from 2010 to 2013 suggests that disparities exist in diagnostic rates for Hispanic versus White children in the Inland Empire. For children living in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, the rate of autism was .99% across all ethnic groups. For White children, the rate of autism was 1.19%, whereas for Hispanic children, the rate of autism was only .70% (Data from Nevison & Parker, 2020). This indicates that White children are diagnosed with ASD more often than Hispanic children in the Inland Empire, and it provides evidence of a disparity in identification and service utilization which must be addressed.</p>	
<p>4. Input from Community</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p>	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
<p>How did your organization use input from the community and/or target population to design the project? What methods did your organization use to allow the community to advise you in designing the project? Were there any changes to your project design as a result of community input?</p>	<p>All aspects of our e-services will be available to both Spanish- and English-speaking families, our targeted population. Content of this program is based upon the input and feedback from families who participated in 2019 and early 2020. In this new iteration, families will qualify for program activities regardless of immigration status, time in the country, services received, country of origin, socioeconomic status, or status as IRC consumers. All components of the proposed project will be <i>free</i> to interested families in the Inland Empire. All materials will be provided in English and/or Spanish, based on the preferred language of the parents and children. All Hispanic and/or low-income families of children with ID and/or ASD in the Coachella Valley will be invited to participate in program activities (though others who do not meet with demographic will not be turned away.)</p> <p><u>Strategies used for increasing the engagement and participation of minority (Hispanic) families will be based on research (Zamora et al., 2016) as well as our previous input collected from families and community members. This input highlights the benefits of (a) partnering with community-based organizations that serve these families, (b) engaging in in-person discussions with parents at local events and centers, and (c) having a culturally and linguistically available member of the program available to answer questions.</u> At SEARCH, we have implemented such strategies to diversify of our programs, and we propose to do so for the current project in the following ways: (a) By partnering with IRC (see Letter), we will open pathways that connect us with English- and Spanish-speaking Latino parents of children with ASD and ID. Furthermore, SEARCH has Hispanic community members as advisory, including individuals on the autism spectrum. (See Letter). (b) SEARCH staff will connect with local schools that serve youth between the ages of 3-21 with ID and/or autism during key transition periods. We aim to make families aware of appropriate regional center services, if needed. UC Riverside is supportive of these efforts (See letter from the Dean of the Graduate School of Education) (c) SEARCH staff will solicit the help of local disability networks (see Letter, State Council on Developmental Disabilities) to identify families of children and youth with ID and/or autism who are interested in receiving education and/or parent support. Once families are identified, we will be able to speak one-on-one to families (by phone or via video conference) about our programs/services. When/if COVID-19 restrictions lift, we can also speak with families in person. (d) SEARCH and Inland Regional Center include personnel who are fluent in written and oral Spanish. This will minimize language barriers in our outreach efforts and will be instrumental to the program components. Other means of program promotion will include creating relevant information (in English and Spanish) that will be available on websites, social media, and through mailed letters. <i>Our online presence and outreach will be critical for encouraging families to utilize our proposed package of services and to available themselves of POS.</i></p>	
5. Improve Access	Applicant Response	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
<p>How will your project improve equity, access and reduce barriers to services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families and is sustainable?</p>	<p>Only 60 miles east of Riverside is the Coachella Valley, a region of approximately 440,000 people, including such resort towns as Palm Springs, Rancho Mirage, and Palm Desert. While this area is often associated with wealth, one third of its residents lack health insurance and 48.7% of children under 17 live in poverty. Ethnic/racial minority families in this region also have lower educational attainment, are more likely to live in poverty, and earn less income. These figures suggest a significant need to improve access and utilization of developmental disability services in the Coachella Valley, not just at the time of diagnosis but throughout the multiple transitional periods that exist between ages 3 and 21.</p> <p><u>Socioeconomic and Racial/Ethnic Disparities for Target Population.</u> Based on the 2018 SocioNeeds Index, a measure of socioeconomic need that is correlated with poor health and welfare outcomes, Coachella Valley has a 99.2 index score out of 100, and surrounding cities in the Inland Empire have equally high scores (American Community Survey, 2018). This indicates that the Coachella Valley's healthcare systems (as well as the systems in surrounding regions) compare negatively to other regions in California.</p> <p>Approximately 60% of Riverside and San Bernardino County residents are underrepresented minorities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016), including those who are Hispanic/Latino. Approximately 22% of residents are foreign born, of which 54% are not U.S. citizens, and 40% speak a language other than English at home. Among those speaking another language, one in every three households speaks Spanish (U.S. Consensus Bureau, 2016). <i>It is critical to ensure that information about autism and developmental disabilities is shared in Spanish to reduce disparities in both initial diagnosis and provision of services. This project will contribute to reducing disparities, and we hope will be one of the primary purveyors of information in the desert areas of the Inland Empire. As such, over the two years of the program, we aim to work with IRC to monitor increases in POS.</i></p>	
<p>6. Support RC's Recommendations</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p>	
<p>How does this project support the RC recommendations and plan to promote equity and reduce disparities in their catchment area? If you are a RC, how does this project support your recommendations and plan to promote equity and reduce your identified disparities? How will your project collaborate with other organizations that serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families?</p>	<p>Given the number of eligible Hispanic consumers who do not have any POS, the purpose of the current re-application is to increase access to information, education, and support for Hispanic families (particularly those who are Spanish-speaking and/or who live in rural areas of the Coachella valley). As such, when parents/caregivers sign up for our suite of services, we will seek their permission to forward names to IRC. With that action, IRC can promptly look for an increase in POS or new POS actions. It is our understanding from communicating directly with IRC that IRC strives to raise awareness about who it serves, how it serves. In addition, IRC welcomes community partners, such as SEARCH, to share this information with the community.</p>	
<p>7. Project different or unique</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p>	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
<p>How is the proposed project unique or different from a currently funded grant (e.g., strategies, activities, and goals) in the proposed regional center catchment area? If the project is similar to a currently funded grant listed on the Department's website, how is the proposed project different?</p>	<p>This project is unique or different from the previous/current one in several ways, outlined in the four project phases. The long-term goal is to empower families to advocate for needed services, and to utilize culturally-relevant practices to support families in their understanding, navigation, and selection of available regional center services (that results in POS). While regional center has an excellent website with relevant information, we have learned over the years at SEARCH that this particular target population prefers more personal and targeted methods for obtaining information and pathways to services.</p> <p>Thus, our goal is to reach families directly and encourage them to access the variety of supports available through POS. <i>The proposed re-application will span two years and will include an online suite of both personalized and general information about supports for families of children with autism and/or intellectual disability, aged 3-21.</i> To our knowledge, this approach is unique for Inland Southern California.</p>	
<p>8. Activities & Measures to Achieve Goal</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p>	
<p>Clearly and specifically state how the schedule of activities and measures demonstrate the operational details and steps that the project will take to achieve its stated goals, activities, and measures. Note: Before answering this question, applicant may want to complete the Activities Template located in the tab directly above.</p>	<p>The project's schedule of activities and measures takes into account the operational details and steps necessary to achieve our primary goal (i.e., to empower families of youth with ASD and ID to access appropriate supports and services in the Inland Empire). Project activities directly map onto the four phases, and will be accomplished within each six-month period. These projections were partly determined based on our successful implementation of SEARCH's family outreach and education program through the initial grant. While performance measures will be used to understand whether the primary goal was met, they also serve as a feedback system from which to assess each activity and project progress. Progress reporting will also help ensure that activities are monitored accordingly, and that implemented measures are being used to close the gap between targeted and actual performance.</p>	
<p>9. Measures</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p>	
<p>Are your proposed measures appropriate to track project goals and activities, provide insight into the effectiveness of the overall design of the project and demonstrate how the impact on the community will be evaluated?</p>	<p>Overall, project measures assess several specific and relevant outcomes, including: (a) the quantity and quality of accessible internet media products (podcasts) and virtual events (webinars, mentorship sessions) developed; (b) the number of community leaders and stakeholders contacted to share information about program activities; (c) stakeholders' satisfaction with products and events; and (d) experienced barriers to service access and utilization across three major transitional periods for families of youth with ASD/ID (ages 3-21) in the Inland Empire. All materials and measures will be provided in both English and Spanish; bilingual staff will be available for all aspects of the proposed program. Data from these measures will ultimately help inform SEARCH and Inland Regional Center, as well as the CA Department of Developmental Services, about the current state of service utilization and access among the target population in this catchment area.</p>	
<p>10. Budget Narrative</p>	<p>Applicant Response</p>	

APPLICANT QUESTION	APPLICANT RESPONSE	ATTACHMENTS
<p>Note: Before uploading your Budget Narrative, applicants should complete the Budget Template located in the tab directly above. After you complete the Budget Template, please return to this question to upload your Budget Narrative.</p> <p>The project budget is consistent with stated projected goals and activities, and clearly and concisely explains how the proposed expenditures support the overall project design. The project budget costs are clearly associated with the project activities and goals. The project budget does not include non-allowable costs. The overall project budget is appropriate to the outcomes proposed. Please attach your Budget Narrative document. An example of a Budget Narrative can be found in Attachment C.</p>		1
Proposal Certification		
Certification		
1. Applicant & Regional Center Discussion	Applicant Response	
If you are a CBO, have you discussed your proposal with the RC(s)?	Yes	
2. Applicant Certification By submitting this application, the Applicant is certifying the truth and accuracy of the proposal. The applicant also certifies that if you have subcontracting organizations, each participating organization has reviewed your project and agrees to their assigned activities, measures, and the budget. (Select Yes or No and enter you name in the comment box.)	Applicant Response Yes	1
Applicant Comment	Tim Wolfe	